197. Needs of the Ezhavas.

MR. C. V. KUNJURAMAN (*Member, Nominated*) spoke about the need for devoting greater attention to remove the poor representation of Ezhavas and certain other communities similarly circumstanced in the public service and on popular bodies such as the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the Legislative Council. He said that several representations on the subject of inequalities among communities in relation to popular bodies had been made before ; and even last year 25 members had spoken on the same subject. That showed the seriousness of the matter and it was necessary that the Government bestowed their early attention on it. There was a certain section of the public opinion against communal representation in the public service and popular bodies. He too would have held the same opinion, had his community also had already a fair representation in the public service and on the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. But that was not the case and the necessity had therefore arisen to represent the matter to the Government. Those who held the above view were people belonging to the advanced and powerful communities. It was regrettable that no settled policy was purused to redress the greivances of the Ezhavas by removing certain disabilities they were labouring under for a long time. As old instances he referred to the case of the father of Mr. P. Madhavan Vaidyan who was refused admission to the Pleadership Examination on the ground of his being an Ezhava. On the very same ground, the brother of that gentleman was not admitted to the Medical class although he stood second in the entrance examination. An Ezhava graduate at the time of the Hon'ble Mr. Rama Aiyangar was not given an appointment in the public service, although there were many appointments available then, as it was about that time that the Revenue Settlement was commenced. Communal bickerings had their origin during the regime of Dewan Mr. Rama Rao and memorials were presented by the several communities. Even Ezhavas who were following their peaceful avocations such as tapping, weaving and coir industry, were persuaded to present memorials. Weaving had since become the industry of all classes of people with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi and others. As for tapping, the Ezhavas were entrusted only with tapping proper and all the other duties such as sale of liquor, were managed by members of other communities. If all the items of work connected with the production and sale of liquor had been entrusted to the Ezhavas, they would have very easily replaced the Excise Department. But it had become difficult for them to get even an appointment in the Abkari branch of that department. They would be quite content if appointments in the Excise Department be given to the Ezhavas alone. They constituted a seventh of the whole population of the State; and judged by numerical strength, the appointments in the Excise Department would be proportionately quite sufficient for their community.

In conclusion, the member said that it was only during the regime of Sir P. Rajagopalachariar that the Ezhavas were granted some concessions. Similar concessions had been shown during the past two years. More concessions should be shown and the grievances of the community redressed.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Kunjuraman, your representation will be carefully considered.

198. Needs of the Cheramars.

MR. PARADI ABRAHAM ISAAC (*Member, Nominated*) made some suggestions for the advancement of the Cheramar community. The Cheramars were not able to take advantage of the fee concessions granted to their children because the parents were too poor to clothe and feed their children. It would therefore be a real benefit to the community if the school-going children thereof were given mid-day meal.

The Cheramars living in towns were backward in education. Compulsory education among them should therefore be introduced in the towns of Nagercoil, Trivandrum, Quilon, Alleppey and Kottayam.

The Cheramars were not able to go in for collegiate or technical education, because they were not given fee concessions in colleges and technical schools. Special scholarships for Cheramars should therefore be instituted in such institutions in the

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same way as Mahomedan scholarships. There were many Cheramars who had passed the Vernacular School Leaving and Vernacular Higher Examinations. Many were employed in Mission schools and some in Government schools. There were many others who had no appointments. They had no facilities for knowing the existence of vacancies in the several departments so that they might make timely applications. It would be well if acting and permanent vacancies in all departments be notified in the *Gazette*. The Cheramars should also be freely entertained in the Judicial, Police, Excise, Forest, Medical, Anchal, Revenue and Education departments and they should be given preferential treatment for the purpose.

The Inspectress of Girls' Schools should be specially asked to provide appointments to as many Cheramar women as possible who had passed the Vernacular School Leaving Examination.

Cheramars could not always enter the public service before completing the 25th year of age. The rule regarding age-limit should not therefore be applied to the Cheramars.

The nurses and cooks employed in the various hospitals in the State were not attending to the wants of Cheramar and Sambavar in-patients on the ground of the latter belonging to the low caste. One female peon from the Cheramar community should therefore be employed in every hospital in the State for attending to in-patients from the depressed classes.

The proposal to remove the Atirampuzha hospital to Ettumannur should be abandoned as the latter place was not accessible to all classes of people and that was why the hospital there was removed to Atirampuzha. The re-transfer should, if at all, be ordered only after a local inspection by the Inspecting Medical Officer.

Co-operative societies were a necessity for improving the economic condition of the Cheramars. There were more than 200 co-operative societies belonging to their community ; but on account of their backwardness, they could not maintain proper registers and other records connected with such societies. The Economic Development Board had therefore recommended the appointment of Group Secretaries of Co-operative Societies on a pay of Rs. 12 each. The member requested that at least 12 such secretaries be appointed from among the qualified Cheramars on the scale of pay allowed to Vernacular School teachers.

Two Inspectors of Co-operative Societies at least should at once be appointed from among those Cheramars who had passed the English School Leaving Examination.

The grass-cutters who were supplying grass to the Body Guard were given a pay of only Rs. $5\frac{3}{4}$ each per mensem while the corresponding pay of a grass-cutter in the Royal Stables was Rs. 7. The pay of the former should be raised to Rs. 10 at least and the appointments of grass-cutters should be made pensionable.

A large number of Cheramars were engaged as coolies in the estates in Peermade and Mundakayam, but on the road to those places they had no *satrams*. A *satram* should be erected at Changanachery and another at Vazhur. One more member from the Planting constituency of the Devicolam Division should be elected for the Assembly.

The member then spoke at length about the need for changing the name of his community from "Pulaya" to "Cheramar". The word "Pulaya" was repulsive in that it implied *'pula'* or *'teendal'* (pollution) and was an obstacle to their free entrance into public institutions such as schools, Anchal Offices, *Pakuthi* Cutcherries, etc. They were the real labouring class in the State from the earliest times and their original name was "Cheramar". The name "Pulaya" was of later origin. That name was a disgrace to them and it was only after changing it that they could keep pace with the other communities in progress. The Government alone had the power to change the name and they had in similar cases converted the name "Shanars" into 'Nadars' and 'Sudras' into 'Nairs'.

Till about two years ago, four members were being nominated to the Assembly from among the Cheramar community, but that practice had been stopped. The

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Assembly Rules did not also provide for election among the Cheramars who numbered about 4 lakhs, while they provided for election of members from other communities. The Rules should be amended and at least 6 seats in the Assembly should be reserved for the Cheramars.

Lastly, the Cheramar *Sangham* should be allowed to return one member to the Legislative Council.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Paradi Abraham Isaac, I have listened to all your representations and they will be borne in mind. Regarding your suggestion that you should not in future be called 'Pulayas' but be called 'Cheramars', I have but one observation to make. Not many days ago in this very hall a large assemblage of Pulayas objected in the strongest possible terms to have their name 'Pulaya' changed to 'Cheramar'. Unless and until the community speaks with one voice in the matter, it is not possible to impose a change upon the community as a whole.

199. Needs of the Kaniyars.

MR. M. K. PADMANABHA KANIYAR (*Member, Nominated*) pleaded for the freer recruitment of qualified Kaniyar youths to the public service and also for the promotion of those already in service. In Travancore, public service was considered very important and qualified youths waiting for appointments in Government service were increasing in large numbers. Among them the Kaniyars had no chance of encouragement in any department. Although the Government had issued circulars for the encouragement of the backward communities, no tangible effect was produced. The Kaniyars were poor, most loyal and law-abiding. There had been as yet no Kaniyar convicts. The number of qualified men among them was only about twenty-five. One of them had passed the School Final Examination and was employed as a copyist in the Trivandrum Division Cutcherry. He had put in a service of about seven years but he had not yet been given a promotion. Another was a *munshi* in a Malayalam School but he got no transfer to an English School in spite of several representations. Of the 112 grant-in-aid *vaidyans* in the State, only five were from the Kaniyar community. Although 10 new *vaidyasalas* were being opened every year, no Kaniyar *vaidyan* had been appointed during the past two years. The Government should pay greater attention to the encouragement of Kaniyars in the public service.

One Kaniyar should be nominated to every session of the Assembly. There was no Kaniyar who was paying a land tax of Rs.50. There was therefore no chance of a Kaniyar member being returned from any of the general constituencies. Nomination was the only hope and the Government should pay particular attention to that.

Lastly, one member from among the Kaniyars should be nominated to the Legislative Council during the next general election.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Your representations will be duly considered.

The Assembly was prorogued at 3-52 P. M.

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